

Message Text

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E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, PGOV, TH

SUBJ: ELECTION DEVELOPMENTS

SUMMARY. AS OF COB FEBRUARY 10, OVER 1000 CANDIDATES HAVE FILED FOR APRIL 4 ELECTION. NO SURPRISES YET. RETIRED POL GEN PHOT PHEKKANAN RUNNING IN CHONBURI ON SOCIAL ACTION PARTY SLATE. TO DATE THREE DEMOCRATS, TWO THAI NATION, ONE SOVEREIGNTY JUSTICE PARTY AND ONE UNITED DEMOCRATIC FRONT PARTY MEMBER RUNNING IN KHUKRIT'S CONSTITUENCY. GOVERNMENT ANNOUNCES APPOINTMENT OF 17-MAN ELECTION CONTROL COMMITTEE. FOUR SOCIALIST PARTY EXECUTIVES DECIDE NOT TO RUN. END SUMMARY.

1. DURING THE FIRST TWO DAYS OF REGISTRATION, 1002 CANDIDATES FILED FOR ELECTION ON APRIL 4. DEMOCRATS LEAD THE LIST OF REGISTERED CANDIDATES WITH 163. THE SOCIAL ACTION PARTY (SAP) HAS 154; THAI NATION 128; NEW FORCE 88; SOCIAL JUSTICE 85; PEOPLE'S FORCE 77, SOCIALISTS 56; AND SOCIAL NATIONALISTS 59. TO DATE ONLY 31 OF THE 55 REGISTERED POLITICAL PARTIES HAVE FIELDDED CANDIDATES. CANDIDATES CAN REGISTER UP TO CLOSE OF BUSINESS FEBRUARY 13.

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2. NO SURPRISES IN THE CANDIDATES. FORMER POLICE DIRECTOR GENERAL, PHOT PHEKKANAN, FILED IN THE SECOND CONSTITUENCY OF CHONBURI PROVINCE AS A MEMBER OF THE SOCIAL ACTION PARTY. ALSO RUNNING IN THIS 2-SEAT CONSTITUENCY IS SIRIYOTHIN OF THE THAI NATION PARTY. A SAP OFFICIAL CONFIRMED TO EMBOFF ON FEBRUARY 7 THAT PRIME MINISTER KHUKRIT PRAMOT INSISTED ON SAP ACCEPTANCE OF PHOT INTO THE PARTY, DESPITE VOCIFEROUS AND PUBLIC OPPOSITION WITHIN THE PARTY.

3. IN KHUKRIT'S MILITARY DOMINATED CONSTITUENCY IN BANGKOK, TWO THAI NATION, THREE DEMOCRATS, A MEMBER OF THE RIGHT-WING NAWAPHON MOVEMENT BACKED SOVEREIGNTY JUSTICE PARTY AND A MEMBER OF THE UNITED DEMOCRATIC FRONT PARTY HAVE FILED. THREE MP'S WILL BE ELECTED FROM THIS CONSTITUENCY. THE DEMOCRATS ARE SAMAK SUNTHARAWET, DEPUTY SECRETARY GENERAL OF THE PARTY; PRATHET ROMMAYANON, BROTHER AND FORMER CAMPAIGN MANAGER OF THAI NATION CANDIDATE PRATHUAN ROMMAYANON, WHO IS RUNNING IN THE SAME CONSTITUENCY; AND GENERAL THAWIT SENIWONG NA AYUTTHAYA, FORMER DEFENSE MINISTER IN THE SHORT-LIVED SENI GOVERNMENT. THE UNITED DEMOCRATIC FRONT CANDIDATE IS MRS. CHOMKHWAN BURANASONGKHRAM THE WIFE OF AN ARMY COLONEL AND THE DAUGHTER OF GENERAL LUANG HANSONGKHRAM, CHIEF OF STAFF OF THE ROYAL THAI ARMY IN PHIBUNSONGKHRAM'S TIME. THE NEW FORCE PARTY HAS YET TO ANNOUNCE WHICH OF THEIR CANDIDATES WILL RUN AGAINST KHUKRIT.

4. THE GOVERNMENT ANNOUNCED ON FEBRUARY 10 THE APPOINTMENT OF A 17-MAN ELECTION CONTROL COMMITTEE TO OVERSEE THE FORTHCOMING GENERAL ELECTIONS. THE MEMBERS CHOSEN ARE RESPECTED ACADEMICS, BUREAUCRATS, AND JUDGES PAST AND PRESENT. THE GOVERNMENT HAS HAD A BIT OF TROUBLE FINDING MEMBERS FOR THIS COMMITTEE BECAUSE OF ITS ILL-DEFINED DUTIES AND POWERS AND THE NEED TO SELECT PROMINENT, RESPECTED BUT NON-CONTROVERSIAL PERSONALITIES. PUAI UNGPHAKON, RECTOR OF THAMMASAT UNIVERSITY, WAS MENTIONED AS A POSSIBLE CHOICE TO HEAD THE COMMITTEE BUT HE WAS TOO CONTROVERSIAL. POL MG LUANG ATTHASIT, HIGHLY RESPECTED FORMER MINISTER OF INTERIOR IN THE SANYA AND SENI GOVERNMENTS, WAS ALSO

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MENTIONED AS A POSSIBILITY BUT HIS PRESENT MEMBERSHIP ON THE PRIVY COUNCIL MILITATED AGAINST HIS SELECTION.

5. COMPOSITION OF COMMITTEE AS FOLLOWS:

DR. KAMTHON PAHANTULAP, RECTOR OF RAMKHAMHAENG UNIVERSITY WILL HEAD THE COMMITTEE. OTHER MEMBERS ARE PAKON UNGSUSING, FORMER DIRECTOR, LOTTERY BUREAU; BUNMA WONGSAWAN,

FORMER MINISTER OF FINANCE (FIRST SANYA GOVERNMENT); PHAIROT CHAIYANAM, FORMER UNDERSECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS; MALAI HUWANAN, FORMER DEPUTY INTERIOR MINISTER; YONG LUANGRANSI, SUPREME COURT JUSTICE; COL. CHINDA NA SONGKHLA, SECRETARY GENERAL OF THE CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSION; SIRI SANTHABUT, FORMER BANGKOK GOVERNOR; DR. FON SAENG SINGKHAEO, FORMER UNDERSECRETARY OF STATE FOR PUBLIC HEALTH; THONGKHAM CHARUHETI, FORMER CHIEF JUSTICE OF THE SUPREME COURT; AT WISUTYOTHAPHIBAN, FORMER GOVERNOR OF BANGKOK; PRICHA KOSONPHAN, INSPECTOR GENERAL OF THE PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE; RANGSARIT CHAWANASIRI, DIRECTOR GENERAL OF THE FINE ARTS DEPT., MINISTRY OF EDUCATION; POL GEN SISUK MAHINTHARATHEP, DIRECTOR GENERAL OF THE POLICE; UTHAI KAPPIYABUT, DIRECTOR GENERAL, PUBLIC PROSECUTOR'S DEPARTMENT; DAMRONG SUNTHONSARATHUN, DEPUTY UNDERSECRETARY OF STATE OF THE INTERIOR; AND SOMPHOP HOTRAKIT, SECRETARY GENERAL, JURIDICAL COUNCIL AND FORMER DEPUTY MINISTER OF JUSTICE IN THE SECOND SANYA GOVERNMENT.

5. ACCORDING TO THE FEBRUARY 11 BANGKOK POST, FOUR EXECUTIVES OF THE SOCIALIST PARTY OF THAILAND HAVE DECIDED NOT TO RUN FOR ELECTION ON APRIL 4, REPORTEDLY BECAUSE THEY HAVE MORE IMPORTANT WORK TO DO OUTSIDE THE PARLIAMENT. OTHER REASONS MAY BE THE LACK OF FUNDS AND THE THREATS OF ASSASSINATION, WHICH ARE PUBLICLY BRUIED ABOUT TOWN. THE FOUR SOCIALISTS ARE KHAISAENG SUKSAI, DEPUTY PARTY LEADER; BUNSANONG BUMYOTHAYAN, SECRETARY GENERAL; AND BUNYEN WOTHONG AND CHIT WETCHAPRASIT, MEMBERS OF THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE. KHAISAENG RAN AND WON IN THE LAST GENERAL ELECTIONS; THE OTHERS RAN AND LOST. BUNSANONG RAN AGAIN IN THE JUNE 1975 BY-ELECTION IN CHIANG MAI AND LOST AGAIN.

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